

Research On Opportunities, Challenges and Countermeasures of Employment Security for Persons with Disabilities in The Digital Era

Yutong He ^{1, *} and Jifang Qiu ²

¹ School of Public Administration, Southwest Minzu University, Chengdu, China

² School of Chinese Language and Literature, Southwest Minzu University, Chengdu, China

* Corresponding Author Email: 1322059388@qq.com

Abstract. With the arrival of the digital era, the traditional employment model is undergoing transformation and upgrading, and how to improve the employment security system for people with disabilities in the digital era has attracted social attention. This paper analyzes the significance of promoting the employment of people with disabilities, and points out the opportunities contained in policy assistance, digital empowerment and Internet training for the employment of people with disabilities in the digital era. At the same time, we must also face up to the challenges of insufficient employment policy protection, insufficient attention to human capital, and unequal access to digital information. In view of this, this paper proposes feasible coping strategies, aiming to provide insights for the employment security of persons with disabilities in the digital era in China and lighten the path of employment for persons with disabilities.

Keywords: Digital age; persons with disabilities; employment security.

1. Introduction

Employment is the greatest livelihood. The CPC Central Committee attaches great importance to the issue of employment, implements the strategy of giving priority to employment, and a series of employment stabilization policies have been introduced to stabilize employment. The report of the twentieth CPC National Congress clearly proposes that the public service system for employment should be improved, the employment support system for key groups should be perfected, the employment support system for groups in difficulty should be strengthened, and everyone should have the opportunity to realize his or her own development through hard work. To realize fuller and higher-quality employment, it is crucial to grasp the key groups. People with disabilities are a key group in the employment issue, and the employment of them is crucial to stabilizing the overall employment situation, and solving their employment problems is a top priority. In order to implement the spirit of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important instructions on the cause of persons with disabilities, and to promote the realization of higher-quality employment for persons with disabilities, the State Council issued the Three-Year Action Plan for Promoting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities (2022-2024), which strengthens the guarantee of employment for persons with disabilities.

Even with policy support, the employment situation of disabled people in China is still serious and complicated, facing problems such as low employment rate and low level of employment positions. According to the latest China Disabled Persons Statistical Yearbook, the number of disabled persons employed in China is 10.275 million, of which 5.625 million are employed in urban areas and 4.65 million are employed in rural areas [1], which are mainly concentrated in the service industry, manufacturing industry, wholesale and retail trade and other low-level industries, and there are problems such as low wages and poor welfare. At present, the employment rate of disabled people is only 31.5%, compared with the employment rate of able-bodied people of 72%, the situation is not optimistic. It can be seen that the employment problems of persons with disabilities in China in the new era need to be resolved urgently.

2. Significance of promoting the employment of persons with disabilities

2.1. Conducive to improving the livelihood of persons with disabilities

People's quality of life is an important indicator of the level of social construction. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized in the report of the 20th Party Congress that "enhancing people's livelihood and well-being and improving people's quality of life" [2], putting forward clear requirements for improving people's quality of life. Disabled people are a member of the social family, and the employment of them can not only help them to live in peace on the material level, but also help them to integrate into the society and realize the value of life. A stable income can satisfy the basic needs of the disabled and keep them away from the hardship of material life. More importantly, employment also means equal participation in social life, which is another important dimension to enhance the quality of individual life. By participating in the work, disabled people can enhance the connection with the society, get their own social circle, effectively prevent "marginalization" [3], share the material and cultural achievements of the society, and then improve the quality of spiritual life.

2.2. Help to realize the value of human capital of disabled people

Human capital is the foundation and source of social development, and its effective allocation and utilization play a decisive role in promoting social progress. As an integral part of the social system, persons with disabilities represent an important force to be reckoned with in the process of China's socialist construction. Although disabled people have physical or mental defects, they also have the ability to work and rich innovative spirit, and the unique way of perception allows them to engage in more than ordinary people's work, the comparative advantage of the human capital of disabled people [4] is gradually highlighting. For example, blind people do not have vision, only through the sense of touch and hearing to perceive the world, so the sound and touch is particularly sensitive, suitable for music, language jobs; deaf people image thinking is particularly developed, suitable for arts and crafts, design jobs. While these special positions give persons with disabilities the space to give full play to their characteristics, the increase in labour resources will enable social expenditure to be transformed into productivity, adding new impetus to the sustainable development of our economy and society.

2.3. Conducive to the promotion of harmonious social development

Social progress and development is not only about economic prosperity, but also about social equity and harmony. By providing employment opportunities for the disabled, it is conducive to promoting the cause of persons with disabilities and plays an important role in building a harmonious society. First, the promotion of the concept of "equality, participation and sharing" for persons with disabilities signifies respect for human dignity and the upholding of human rights. Through the provision of employment opportunities, persons with disabilities are able to participate fully in social production and strengthen their sense of social value. In the workplace, persons with disabilities have the opportunity to display their unique talents and contribute to society in the same way as others, realizing their personal values while at the same time demonstrating social justice. In addition, promoting the employment of persons with disabilities contributes to the stability and progress of society as a whole, thereby creating a fair, harmonious and inclusive social environment.

3. Opportunities for employment of persons with disabilities in the digital age

3.1. Policy support and employment protection

Policy support plays a crucial role in safeguarding the employment of persons with disabilities. China attaches great significance to the policies to help the disabled to find jobs, and governments have introduced a series of preferential policies on employment, provided skills training, and promoted the construction of barrier-free environments. Firstly, at present, China has formed a policy

system of employment for the disabled based on the Employment Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China, with the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities as the main content, and supplemented by the relevant rules and regulations of the civil affairs and the Disabled Persons' Federation, etc. [5], to escort the employment of persons with disabilities. Secondly, China insists on taking the digital employment and entrepreneurship needs of people with disabilities as the guide, continuously improves the construction of the training system for people with disabilities, integrates the training resources of social forces and vocational colleges and universities, creates training bases for people with disabilities, focuses on the digital skills training program, and enriches and improves the bank of vocational skills training programs for people with disabilities. In addition, the Government is actively promoting the construction of a barrier-free environment. It is clearly stated in the "14th Five-Year Plan" that it will accelerate the construction of information accessibility to help people with disabilities share a better digital life. The construction of barrier-free environment has transformed "obstacles" into "love" and enabled more people with disabilities to realize full and quality employment [6]. In short, the formulation of various reasonable and effective support policies in the digital era has further liberated and enhanced the employment potential of people with disabilities and provided basic protection for their employment.

3.2. Digital Empowerment and Intelligent Assistance

The synchronized collaboration, mobility and remote control features of digital technology have created conditions for the flexible employment of persons with disabilities. In recent years, under the leadership of the Party Group Council of China Disabled Persons' Federation, China Disabled Persons' Assistive Devices Center has been actively promoting the innovation and development of assistive devices for the disabled. For example, voice recognition technology can help people with disabilities with language impairments with text input; screen readers and amplifiers can help people with disabilities with visual impairments read and browse web pages; and smart hearing aids can help people with hearing impairments communicate. In addition, telecommuting, born in the digital age, has broken the traditional mode of employment and brought a lot of convenience to the employment of persons with disabilities. For people with physical disabilities, telecommuting reduces their physical barriers in traditional work environments. At the same time, for the linguistically disabled, telecommuting alleviates their difficulties in language communication [7]. With the development of more and more digital technologies and intelligent tools, the field of employment for persons with disabilities will be further broadened and the quality of employment will be greatly improved, thus truly realizing digital empowerment and intelligent assistance for persons with disabilities.

3.3. Digital training and skills upgrading

Vocational skills training for persons with disabilities is an effective measure to increase the employment rate of the disabled, and the rapid development of the "Internet Plus" emerging technology has provided brand-new opportunities for vocational skills training for persons with disabilities. On the one hand, Internet-based vocational training can provide more flexible and personalized learning paths for persons with disabilities and create more employment opportunities. In addition, the use of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies can break down the spatial and environmental barriers faced by persons with disabilities. By simulating real work scenarios, persons with disabilities are able to engage in practical operations and training in a virtual environment to improve their actual work abilities. On the other hand, the job market in the digital age has a growing demand for knowledge and diverse skills, and persons with disabilities will usher in more high-quality employment opportunities by adapting to the market demand and cultivating the appropriate skills. For example, the development of new contents for vocational skills training, such as e-commerce, which is popular in the digital age, can equip persons with disabilities with information technology skills and enhance their competitiveness in employment. Currently, more and more people with disabilities are realizing employment and entrepreneurship and releasing the power of upward mobility through specialized vocational skills training in Internet and digital technologies

[8]. To sum up, making full use of Internet technology and combining market demand-oriented vocational training will create more employment opportunities for people with disabilities and realize their own career development goals.

4. Challenges to the Employment of the Disabled in the Digital Era

4.1. Insufficient policy protection

Although China attaches great importance to the employment of people with disabilities in the digital era and puts forward corresponding support measures, there are still deficiencies in the guarantee power of the current policies. On the one hand, the scope of protection of some policies is limited [9]. Existing policies and regulations are mainly oriented to people with disabilities in traditional employment modes, and some people with disabilities who utilize the Internet to engage in flexible employment are outside the scope of policy support and are still not well covered by social security. On the other hand, the current employment protection policy for people with disabilities lacks clarity. The content of China's policy on the employment of persons with disabilities starts from the overall situation and the content of the policy is stipulated in principle, with a lack of specific details. There is a lack of strict implementation standards, operational levels and evaluation criteria in the employment policy for persons with disabilities, and the lack of a clear definition of the responsible parties makes the policy insufficiently enforceable, and the lack of rigid content leads to poor operability. The broad content of policies has led to a high degree of arbitrariness on the part of the implementing departments, and the lack of clarity in their responsibilities and powers has made it difficult for the implementing departments to coordinate their efforts. As a result, the effectiveness of the various employment protection policies in actual implementation has not been satisfactory.

4.2. Insufficient attention to human capital

In the digital era, human capital accumulation of persons with disabilities is the basis for flexible employment. Scholars have found that social capital and digital literacy are the intrinsic mechanisms by which human capital accumulation promotes the quality of Internet employment for people with disabilities [10]. However, at the present, persons with disabilities in China still suffer from a lack of employable skills and a low level of digital literacy in the face of digitized employment opportunities. With the development of the times, the requirements for skills in the job market are constantly evolving. However, some people with disabilities lack the skills to adapt to the employment needs in the digital era due to their own physiological factors or the limitations of their education, which makes it difficult for them to adapt to the continuous changes in the demand of the job market. In addition, in the environment of the digital era, the use of network technology has permeated all walks of life. However, many persons with disabilities have a relatively low level of digital literacy and lack mastery of digital tools and network technologies, making the use of modern network equipment an obstacle and missing out on many job opportunities. All in all, only when personal skills and digital literacy have reached a certain level can we make good use of information opportunities, transcend the limitations of our own organism's physiological functions, and effectively realize flexible employment in the digital age.

4.3. Unequal access to digital information

Flexible employment in the digital age is almost always information-related, which poses multiple challenges to the employment of persons with disabilities, including the "digital divide" in terms of access to, use of, and level of awareness of information. The "digital divide" for persons with disabilities refers to the fact that persons with disabilities do not have the right to access and use information on an equal footing with other groups, leading to new information inequalities. First of all, the design concepts and functions of existing Internet application products have not fundamentally considered the usage needs of the disabled community, and the coverage of websites and mobile Internet applications (Apps) in terms of unimpeded transformation is low [11]. The design of related

products seldom takes into account the usage habits, functional needs and cultural level of disabled users, which leads to the fact that they are slowly being disadvantaged in the information society. At the same time, because of the small scope of activities and narrow social media, the disabled group has long existed information technology training barriers, resulting in a lower level of information acquisition ability, poorer ability to identify information, and weaker ability to consume information. In addition, the current stage of Internet applications and other products with high accessibility costs, some of the products can not be sustained in the middle and late operation and management, so that the obstacles can not be completely eliminated [12].

5. Countermeasures to safeguard the employment of persons with disabilities in the digital era

5.1. Improving the employment support mechanism and effectively safeguarding the right to employment of persons with disabilities

On the one hand, the Government should play a leading role in adding provisions on the employment of persons with disabilities in the digital age to the Law on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities and other laws, and in establishing institutional charters to facilitate the development of employment for persons with disabilities using the Internet. Local governments must introduce supportive policies and improve relevant supporting measures, reflecting the preferential nature of policies to safeguard the employment of persons with disabilities in the digital age. In order to help people with disabilities realize Internet employment and entrepreneurship, all-round assistance should be realized through the creation of employment incubation bases, the development of special skills training, the issuance of special subsidies for employment and entrepreneurship, and other multifaceted support measures. The government should also give preferential measures to enterprises providing employment for people with disabilities, including relaxing market access conditions, improving tax reduction and exemption policies, and providing loan subsidies and other preferential policies, in order to create policy synergy.

On the other hand, the participation of enterprises and institutions is also essential. In addition to complying with laws and regulations, enterprises and institutions should also assume their social responsibilities and provide equal employment opportunities and a good working environment for persons with disabilities. Through financial investment and innovative methods, enterprises and institutions can carry out diversified support measures, such as providing specialized positions, skills training and vocational guidance, to help persons with disabilities better integrate into the work environment. At the same time, enterprises and institutions should also actively explore the new model of "Internet + employment of persons with disabilities". By adopting digital work modes such as telecommuting, they are creating a broader space for the employment of persons with disabilities and promoting social inclusion and win-win situations.

5.2. Strengthening employment skills training and increasing the employment rate of the disabled

The government, schools, enterprises and social organizations should take the initiative to explore and form a joint effort to pay attention to the problem of matching the employment of persons with disabilities with the jobs of employers, develop vocational skills training programs that meet the training needs of persons with disabilities and promote employment [13], and enhance the practicality of training. First, develop personalized training programs. For example, for the deaf, focus on providing simple professional skills training such as food processing and production and domestic service; for the blind, because they are particularly sensitive in hearing, touch and other senses, can provide massage, psychological counseling, piano tuning and other training to enhance the target. Second, integrate resources and establish training bases. The Government, schools, enterprises and social organizations have actively cooperated and integrated resources to provide systematic and

specialized employment skills training for persons with disabilities. In addition, digital technology is being utilized to enhance the effectiveness of training. Governments at all levels and disability associations should make full use of Internet technology to improve the understanding and operation of electronic equipment and information technology for people with disabilities through thematic training and public welfare lectures, and to help them establish an Internet marketing mindset, so as to make the level of their human capital compatible with the "Internet+" employment and entrepreneurship model.

At the same time, it is necessary to insist on the form of government-purchased services, and to introduce a third-party evaluation organization [14] to strengthen the evaluation of the training process for people with disabilities. Through a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the teaching quality of the training program, the learning situation of the trainees, and so on, to follow up on the progress of their comprehensive quality improvement, so as to formulate one-to-one career planning for individual needs [15]. The cooperation and joint efforts of multiple forces will help people with disabilities realize fuller, higher quality and more sustainable employment.

5.3. Strengthening information accessibility systems to bridge the "digital divide"

Strengthening the information accessibility system is an important safeguard for persons with disabilities to cross the "digital divide" and obtain equal employment opportunities in the digital age. First, in terms of policy formulation, the State should formulate and improve laws and regulations related to information accessibility in the light of the characteristics of the digital age. As persons with disabilities are the service targets of information accessibility construction, governments and enterprises should ensure that persons with disabilities can have the right to express their opinions when formulating information accessibility standards and policies, and that standards and products that constitute discrimination and obstacles for persons with disabilities are corrected and improved in a timely manner [16].

Secondly, in terms of policy implementation, governments at all levels and relevant departments should strictly carry out the responsibilities and obligations clearly stipulated in laws and regulations, and improve the efficiency of implementation in accordance with the three basic requirements of accessibility, reachability and comprehensibility of information accessibility construction [17]. Specifically, the government can invest funds and resources, cooperate with research institutions, universities and enterprises to encourage and support research and development of digital accessibility technologies and facilities such as accessible web design and e-books, and promote the development and popularization of digital accessibility technologies. Enterprises and institutions should insist on the use of accessible digital information services, such as accessible websites and applications, to ensure that groups of persons with disabilities have equal access to employment information and opportunities.

Finally, in terms of policy supervision, a regular assessment and evaluation mechanism has been established to construct a multi-dimensional information accessibility evaluation index system, and regular inspections and evaluations of the accessible information services of the Government, enterprises and social organizations have been conducted. Giving full play to the supervisory power of persons with disabilities as a third party will be conducive to helping supervisory bodies better understand the needs and concerns of groups of persons with disabilities, so as to ensure that the information rights and interests of groups of persons with disabilities are effectively safeguarded.

6. Conclusion

The employment of the disabled is an arduous and long-term task. With the rapid development of digital technology, the employment of people with disabilities is facing new opportunities and challenges. Digital technology provides policy protection, telecommuting and "Internet +" vocational skills training and other new opportunities for the disabled, injecting new vitality into the employment of the disabled. However, these opportunities are accompanied by challenges. The application of

digital technology has brought to the fore issues such as insufficient employment policy protection, insufficient attention to human capital and unequal access to digital information.

In order to effectively address these challenges, we need to accurately grasp the development trend of digital technology, improve the employment support mechanism for multiple subjects, provide targeted employment skills training, and build an information accessibility environment for persons with disabilities. With the development of the digital age and the concerted efforts of society as a whole, persons with disabilities will have more opportunities to participate in all walks of life and make contributions to the development and progress of society, so that "no one with disabilities will be left behind" on the road to the realization of common prosperity.

References

- [1] China Disabled Persons' Federation. Statistical Yearbook of China's Disability Program 2019 [M]. Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2019.
- [2] Xi Jinping. Holding high the great banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics and unitedly striving for the comprehensive construction of a modernized socialist country: Report at the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China [M]. Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2022:33.
- [3] An Ruitong. Research on the Problem of Employment Security for Disabled People in China [D]. Hebei University,2023.
- [4] Huang Zhen, Song Song. Study on the Special Comparative Advantages of Human Resources of Persons with Disabilities[J]. Research on Disabled People,2011(03):13-18.
- [5] Kang Li, Zhang Xinyue. Research on the employment policy for people with disabilities based on the perspective of policy tools[J]. Population and Society,2022,38(02):89-100.
- [6] Sun Jiling,Suo Haoyu,Chen Gong. Barrier-free environment construction in the process of Chinese-style modernization: significance, development and path[J]. Disability Studies,2023(03):38-46.
- [7] Gao Yuanyuan, Fan Shaofeng. The current situation and countermeasures of home-based employment mode for persons with severe disabilities in China under the background of "Internet+"[J]. Disability Research,2018(04):72-78.
- [8] Hu Jinhua. National People's Congress deputy Zhang Tianren:Promoting Internet self-employment for disabled people[N]. Huaxia Times,2023-03-06(006)
- [9] Fu Bin. Research on the Employment Problem of Disabled People under the Background of "Internet+"[J]. Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Monthly,2019,32(02):146-149.
- [10] Zhao Junli,Chen Gong. Human capital and the quality of Internet employment for people with disabilities[J]. Journal of Beijing Technology and Business University (Social Science Edition),2023,38(05):46-59.
- [11] Jiao Ruoshui,Li Guoquan. Employment of people with disabilities: opportunities and challenges in the Internet era[J]. Disability Research,2019(04):45-53.
- [12] Lei Ming. Accelerating the construction of information accessibility to protect the equal rights and interests of people with disabilities [J]. Disability Research,2022(S1):51-54.
- [13] Zheng Yan, Liu Yuhang, Yang Qiantong et al. Research on countermeasures of vocational skills training for disabled people in Shanxi Province under the background of "Internet+"[J]. Enterprise Science and Technology and Development,2018(03):318-319+322.
- [14] Hua Juan,Xue Wenxia. Analysis of the current situation of employment and countermeasures for people with disabilities [J]. China Journal of Multimedia and Network Teaching(Zhongdian),2023(04):185-188.
- [15] Xu Ning,Li Yan,Li Chang'an. Flexible Employment for People with Disabilities in China: Current Situation, Challenges and Policy Recommendations [J]. Disability Research,2023(01):79-86.
- [16] Li Jing. On the Right to Information Accessibility for People with Disabilities: Theoretical Reconstruction in the Digital Era [J]. Chinese and foreign law,2023,35(03):823-839.
- [17] Li Mu, Ma Hu, Li Qundi et al. Research on the support of information accessibility construction in China [J]. Disability Research,2022(S1):42-50.